Conservation of ground water

†1620. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that the Global Compact Society has expressed its serious concern over the indiscriminated underground water tapping in the cities;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the said institution has also given suggestion to control the use of underground water by the farmers;

(c) whether Government are contemplating to take any action for conservation of underground water; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) "Water" being a State subject, it is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Governments to take action for conservation of underground water. However, the Union Government has initiated following action in this regard:-

(i) The Union Ministry of Water Resources has circulated a Model Bill in the year 1970, which was re-circulated in 1992 and again in 1996 to all the States/Union Territories to enabled them to enact suitable legislation for regulation and control of ground water development. A revised Model Bill, 2005 to regulate and control the development and management of ground water has been again circulated to all the States/Union Territories.

(ii) Circulation of Manual/Guidelines on Artificial Recharge of Ground Water to the States/Union Territories to enable them to formulate area specific artifical recharge schemes to check the declining trend of ground water levels.

(iii) During the IX Plan, CGWB have implemented successfully artificial recharge projects under the Central Sector Scheme for "Study of Recharge to Ground Water" in 27 States/UTs in the country.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(iv) Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) constituted under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 has notified 20 critical areas on consideration of over-exploitation of ground water resources and 32 over-exploited areas for registration of ground water structures.

(v) CGWA is regulating withdrawal of ground water by industries/ Projects. List of critical areas has been circulated to the State Pollution Control Boards and the Ministry of Environment and Forests which refer the new industries/projects to CGWA for obtaining permission.

(vi) Water conservation compaign has been launched keeping in view the various target groups like youth and children, women, farmers and villagers, policy and opinion makers, publicity through print-media, telecasting of sports on the television, broadcasting messages on radio, holding of seminars, workshops, conferences etc., have been undertaken for the purpose.

(vii) The CGWB has also prepared a report entitled "Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water", which envisages recharge of 36453 Million Cubic Metre volume of surplus monsoon runoff, through construction of 39.25 lakhs artificial recharge and roof top main water harvesting structure.

(viii) The Ministry of Agriculture has implemented the National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA), whose impact evaluations have shown that watershed based interventions have led to increase in ground water recharge. Soil and water conservation works are also included under various activities of area development programmes, being undertaken by the Department of Land Resources, under the Ministry of Rural Development.

New authority for Water Shed Programme

1621. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a National Authority for Sustainable Development of Rainfed Areas in order to create a body of professionals to manage the entire Water Shed Programme of the country;